

CITY OF  
*Palos Verdes Estates*

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August 14, 2017

The Honorable Kevin de León  
President pro Tempore  
California State Senate  
State Capitol Building, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
VIA FAX: 916-651-4924

The Honorable Anthony Rendon  
Speaker  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol Building, Room 219  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
VIA FAX: 916-319-2163

**RE: SB 35 (Wiener) Affordable Housing: Streamlined Approval Process.**  
**Notice of Opposition (as amended 7/14/17)**

Dear President pro Tempore de León and Speaker Rendon:

The City of Palos Verdes Estates is opposed to SB 35 (Wiener), which would pre-empt local discretionary land use authority by making approvals of certain multifamily developments “ministerial” actions, bypassing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and public input.

Palos Verdes Estates is a small, 5-square mile residential community. We have 5,000 parcels with no street lights, sidewalks, or signals. Our City is characterized by narrow, steep, winding streets and hillside homes. Over a quarter of the City has been designated as natural parkland. The City retains its unique character through strict zoning and architectural controls that are set forth in a single set of covenants, conditions and restrictions that apply to every home in our community.

Although many of the parcels in the City have already been developed, we are concerned that this legislation will impact future development projects that are adjacent to our City. Should SB 35 be passed and implemented, the following are significant concerns specific to Palos Verdes Estates:

- **Stormwater Runoff**  
Palos Verdes Estates is situated on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and already faces challenges in meeting state-mandated regulations for storm water runoff. If multifamily housing units are allowed to bypass CEQA requirements, additional storm water runoff generated by these developments would have detrimental impacts on the sewers, and street infrastructure.
- **Geotechnical Review**  
With erosion of land from the ocean on the western side of the City and a fault line running through its northern and western boundaries, allowing development without consideration of these geotechnical issues is a concern.
- **Public Engagement**  
Not allowing the public to provide input may result in distrust of government and create tension between neighboring cities and residents.

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Currently, the City of Torrance is considering a development project to build 248 units at the border of Torrance and Palos Verdes Estates. This large project would be located at an intersection that already experiences significant traffic congestion. Many residents have contacted the City with their concerns. In response to the proposed project, the City of Palos Verdes Estates is preparing to submit comments, which will highlight several concerns:

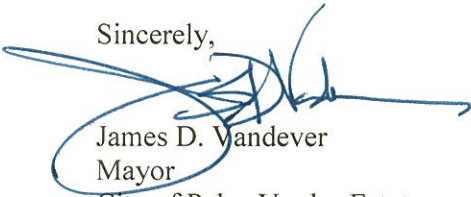
- Noise and air quality impacts due to construction
- Increased traffic congestion
- Preservation of open space
- Impact of parking on residential streets
- Increased noise and light

If this project were to proceed under the proposed legislation, the controls in place to protect the environment and include the public would be eliminated. The significant issues outlined above would not be addressed.

Forcing nearly all communities with a population over 2,500 to “streamline” housing approvals by eliminating opportunities for environmental and public review of major multifamily developments goes against the principles of local democracy and public engagement. While it may be frustrating for some to address neighborhood concerns about traffic, parking and other development impacts, those directly affected by such projects have a right to be heard. Public engagement often leads to better projects.

For these reasons, the City of Palos Verdes Estates opposes SB 35.

Sincerely,



James D. Vandever  
Mayor  
City of Palos Verdes Estates

cc: Palos Verdes Estates City Council  
Senator Ben Allen, District 26  
Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, District 66  
Jeffrey Kiernan, League of California Cities, Regional Public Affairs Manager (via email)  
Meg Desmond, League of California Cities, [mdesmond@cacities.org](mailto:mdesmond@cacities.org)